

SINKING
JAPAN

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列島震撼

さいとう・プロ  作品

日本沈没

小松左京 原作

SPコミックス



japan sinks

SINKING
JAPAN ① Japan sinks

Saito
Productions



Original story by
Sakyo Komatsu

CONTENTS

Japan sinks

156

Chapter 2: Tokyo.

23

Chapter 1: The Japan trench.

5

Epilogue.

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Special thanks to The Japan Meteorological Agency, the Japan Maritime Staff Office, the Japan Science and Technology Agency and the Japan Coast Guard. All maps and diagrams in this book are based on the book "Earth Science" by Hitoshi Takeuchi and Seiya Ueda (Japan Broadcast Publishing Co.).

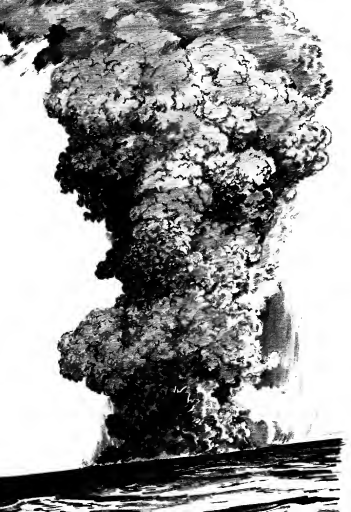




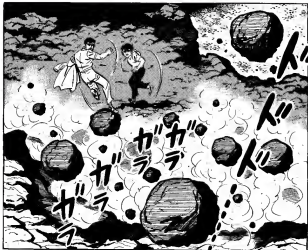
THE EARTHQUAKE ITSELF, WITH A MAGNITUDE OF 6.5, WAS STRONG BUT ON A SCALE WITH OTHER EARTHQUAKES TAKING PLACE AT THE TIME IN JAPAN. WHAT WAS REMARKABLE, HOWEVER, WAS THAT, UNLIKE ORDINARY EARTHQUAKES, IT CAUSED THE SUDDEN ERUPTION OF A DORMANT VOLCANO THAT HAD SHOWN ALMOST NO SIGNS OF ERUPTING UNTIL THEN.

CONTRARY TO WHAT WAS BELIEVED AT THE TIME, THE ERUPTION OF THE AMAGI VOLCANO ON THE IZU PENINSULA AT 11.26 P.M. ON JULY 26, 19---, DID NOT CAUSE THE EARTHQUAKE THAT HIT THE AREA ALMOST AT THE SAME TIME. THE AMAGI ERUPTION, WHICH HAD BEEN RUMORED TO HAPPEN FOR QUITE SOME TIME, WAS TRIGGERED INSTEAD -IT WAS LATER REVEALED- BY A SHALLOW EARTHQUAKE WITH AN EPICENTRE 10 KM UNDER THE SEA IN THE SOUTHWESTERN PART OF SAGAMI BAY, A FACT WHICH DISTINGUISHED IT FROM MOST OTHER ERUPTIONS.









IT'S... STILL
SHAKING!



BUT... THE
ROAD IS GOING
TO BE BLOCKED!

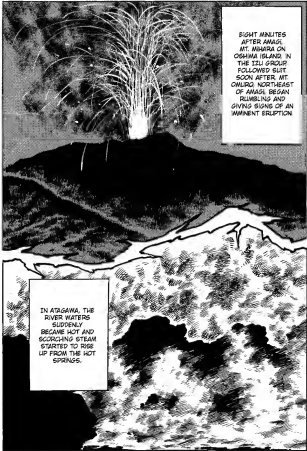
...AND
BACK TO
TOKYO!

HURRY! WE
MUST GET OUT
OF HERE...



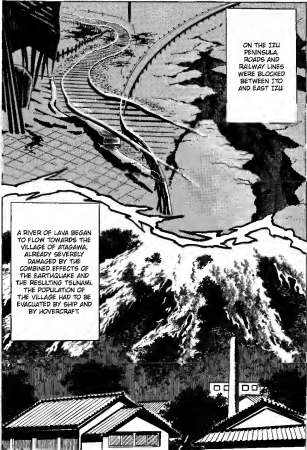






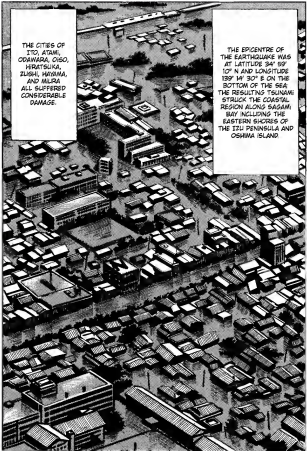
EIGHT MINUTES
AFTER ANAGI,
MT. MIYURA ON
OSHIMA ISLAND, IN
THE IZU GROUP,
FOLLOWED SUIT.
SOON AFTER, MT.
ONJURO, NORTHEAST
OF ANAGI, BEGAN
RUMBLING AND
GIVING SIGNS OF AN
IMMINENT ERUPTION.

IN ATAGAWA, THE
RIVER WATERS
SUDDENLY
BECAME HOT AND
SCORCHING STEAM
STARTED TO RISE
UP FROM THE HOT
SPRINGS.



ON THE IZU
PENINSULA,
ROADS AND
RAILWAY LINES
WERE BLOCKED
BETWEEN ITO
AND EAST IZU

A RIVER OF LAVA BEGAN
TO FLOW TOWARDS THE
VILLAGE OF ATASAWA,
ALREADY SEVERELY
DAMAGED BY THE
COMBINED EFFECTS OF
THE EARTHQUAKE AND
THE RESULTING TSUNAMI.
THE POPULATION OF
THE VILLAGE HAD TO BE
EVACUATED BY SHIP AND
BY HOVERCRAFT.

An aerial, black-and-white photograph of a coastal city, likely Sagami Bay, Japan, following a tsunami. The image shows a dense urban area with numerous buildings, many of which are partially submerged in floodwater. The streets are completely inundated, and the water appears to be quite deep. The city is situated along a coastline, with the sea visible in the upper right portion of the frame. The overall scene depicts significant destruction and flooding.

THE CITIES OF
ITO, ATAMI,
ODAWARA, OISO,
HIRATSUKA,
ZUISHI, HAYAMA,
AND MURA
ALL SUFFERED
CONSIDERABLE
DAMAGE.

THE EPICENTRE OF
THE EARTHQUAKE WAS
AT LATITUDE $34^{\circ} 59'$
 $10''$ N AND LONGITUDE
 $139^{\circ} 14' 30''$ E ON THE
BOTTOM OF THE SEA.
THE RESULTING TSUNAMI
STRUCK THE COASTAL
REGION ALONG SAGAMI
BAY INCLUDING THE
EASTERN SHORES OF
THE IZU PENINSULA AND
OSHIMA ISLAND.

THE EARTHQUAKE WAS NOT COMPARABLE IN STRENGTH WITH THE ONE THAT HAD DEVASTATED NORTHERN IZU BACK ON NOVEMBER 28, 1930. HOWEVER, SINCE IT STRUCK THE SO-CALLED "TOKAI MEGALOPOLIS", A HIGHLY POPULATED AREA IN THE PACIFIC INDUSTRIAL BELT, THE SCALE OF THE DAMAGE WAS STILL ENORMOUS.















ACTUALLY,
MY FIELD IS
GEOPHYSICS
BUT...



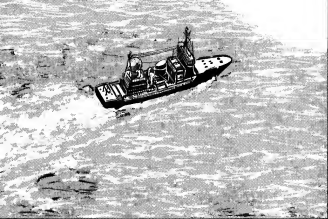
THE EXPERT
IN... UNDERSEA
VOLCANOES?

ONODERA-
KUN, MEET
PROFES-
SOR
TADORA.





*VITYAZ DEEP: LOCATED IN THE MARIANA TRENCH, IT'S THE DEEPEST SPOT IN THE OCEAN (11,430 M). IT WAS DISCOVERED IN 1957 BY THE SOVIET SHIP VITYAZ.





BUT SHE'S
A FAST
SHIP. WE'LL
GET THERE
IN NO TIME.



WE'LL FINISH
IT BEFORE
WE GET TO
HACHIJOJIMA.

I WAS JUST THINKING OF
REPAIRING THE WADATSUMI IN
THE EVENING, ONCE IT COOLS
DOWN.



...IT'S NOT
WORKING
VERY
WELL IN
REVERSE.

...AND I NEED TO
HAVE A LOOK AT
THE WADATSUMI'S
SECOND
PROPELLER'S
FEATHERING
HINGE...



THERE'S A SMALL CRACK
IN ONE OF THE SIDE
WINDOWS BUT WE HAVE
A SPARE PLEXIGLAS ONE.

YEAH, JUST A FEW
SCRATCHES ON THE
SIDE... NOTHING
SERIOUS.

I HEARD THE
BOTTOM OF THE
SONDOLA WAS
SCRAPED... WILL IT
BE OKAY?

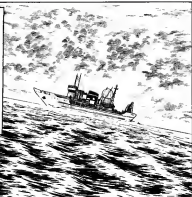


...WHEN WE HEARD NEWS THAT
AN ISLAND IN THE SOUTH HAD
SUNK AND THAT SOME BIG
SHOT OCEANOGRAPHER WITH
THE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
AGENCY HAD ASKED FOR THE
WADATSUMI TO BE SENT TO
INVESTIGATE.

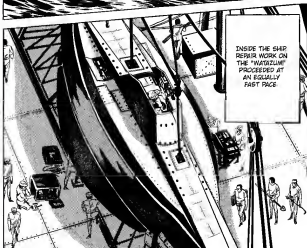
I WAS CONDUCTING
A SURVEY OF
THE SEABED IN
SURUGA BAY FOR
THE SHIZUKA'S
FISHERMEN UNION...

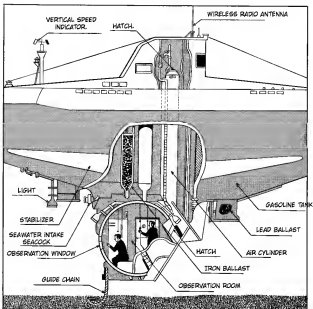


THE "HOKULEI", A
SPRIGHTLY LOOKING
950-TONNE PATROL SHIP,
PURSUED ITS COURSE
TO THE SOUTH AT THE
BRISK SPEED OF 25
KNOTS. IN ITS WAKE, TO
THE NORTH, THE ISLAND
OF HACHISOJIMA HAD
ALREADY DISAPPEARED
BEHIND THE HORIZON.

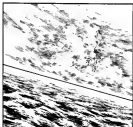


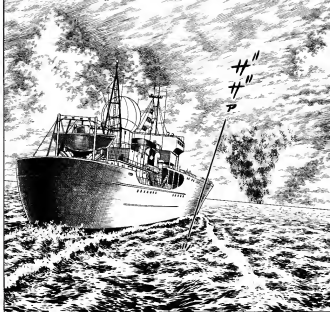
INSIDE THE SHIP
REPAIR WORK ON
THE "WATIZUMI"
PROCEEDED AT
AN EQUALLY
FAST PACE.

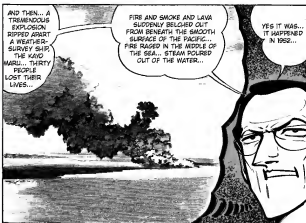


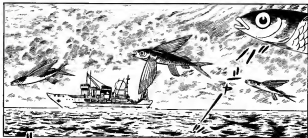














THE FUJI VOLCANIC RANGE... A LONG LINE OF FIRE DOTTED WITH UNDERSEA VOLCANOS WHOSE PEAKS RISE 4000 M FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA, OCCASIONALLY BREAKING ITS SURFACE. CALM, DARK-BLUE TIDAL CURRENTS FLOWING RAPIDLY FROM SOUTH TO NORTH WASH OVER THESE ISLANDS, SCATTERED ACROSS THE OCEAN LIKE SPILLED SAND.



WHAT IS
...?

IT'S SO
STRANGE...



A LOT OF
OTHER THINGS
MOVE ALONG
THE TOPS
OF THOSE
UNDERSEA
MOUNTAINS...

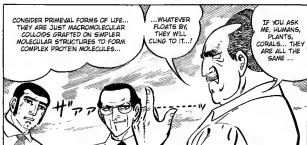
...BIRDS, PLANT
SEEDS AND
SCATTERS THEM
ACROSS THE SMALL
ISLANDS ALONG
THE WAY

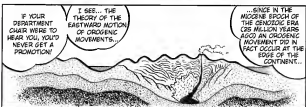
...ALONG THE KUROSHIO
CURRENT? YOU'RE
RIGHT... IT FLOWS FROM
THE WARM SOUTHERN
SEAS CARRYING ALL
KINDS OF CORAL, FISH,
ALGAE...

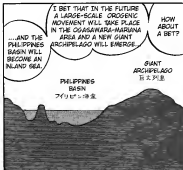
I WAS THINKING
THAT... SO MUCH
MOVES ALONG THIS
ROUTE...



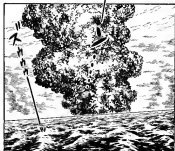








GREEN TUFF* OROGENIC STAGE: AN OROGENIC MOVEMENT THAT OCCURRED IN THE MIDCENE EPOCH OF THE CENOZOIC ERA (25 MILLION YEARS AGO).



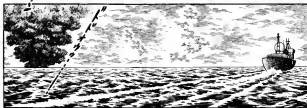




IT WILL
CAUSE A
FEW WAVES
AROUND
AGASHIMA,
THAT'S ALL.

YEAH... A VERY
SMALL ONE.

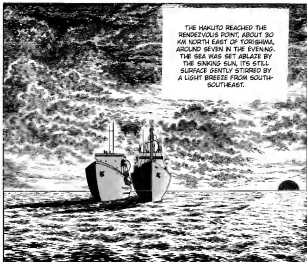
THAT THUMP
BEFORE...
WAS IT A
TSUNAMI?

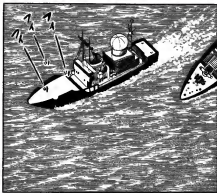






THE HAKUTO REACHED THE
RENDEZVOUS POINT, ABOUT 80
KM NORTH EAST OF TORISHIMA,
AROUND SEVEN IN THE EVENING.
THE SEA WAS SET ABLAZE BY
THE SINKING SUN, ITS STILL
SURFACE GENTLY STIRRED BY
A LIGHT BREEZE FROM SOUTH-
SOUTHEAST.



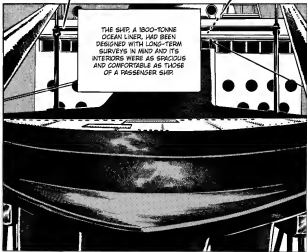




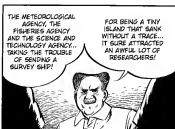
THE DAITO
MARU 3, THE
METEOROLOGICAL
AGENCY'S SURVEY
SHIP, CUT ITS
ENGINES AND
BEGAN TO DRIFT
IN THE QUIET
SEAS...



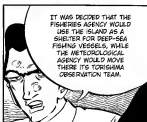
THE SHIP, A 1800-TONNE
OCEAN LINER, HAD BEEN
DESIGNED WITH LONG-TERM
SURVEYS IN MIND AND ITS
INTERIORS WERE AS SPACIOUS
AND COMFORTABLE AS THOSE
OF A PASSENGER SHIP.

















AFTER LUNCH WE HEARD
A WARNING ABOUT A
TROPICAL STORM*
COMING OUR WAY WE
DECIDED TO CLEAR OUT
FAST... THEN THE ENGINE
STARTED GIVING US
PROBLEMS...

...THE STORM
DIDN'T LOOK VERY
THREATENING
BUT WE COULDN'T
STEER THE SHIP
PROPERLY.

...WE COULD
STILL MOVE,
BUT JUST
BARELY...

WE CONSIDERED GOING
TO TORISHIMA BUT THE
PILOT SAID IT WOULD NOT
OFFER MUCH PROTECTION
FROM THE WIND AND
TOLD US INSTEAD ABOUT
A RECENTLY FORMED
ISLAND NORTHEAST OF
TORISHIMA...

REALIZING WE WERE
IN TROUBLE, WE
DECIDED TO MAKE
FOR AN ISLAND BUT
THE CURRENT HAD
ALREADY CARRIED
US WAY NORTH OF
MUKOJIMA...



...HE THOUGHT ITS
HIGH CLIFFS WOULD
PROVIDE US WITH A
GOOD COVER FROM
THE STORM.

TORISHIMA

YANOME ROCK

MUKOJIMA
GROUP

TSU-
OGAS-
WARA
TRENCH

CHICHIJIMA

*TROPICAL STORMS: LOW PRESSURE AREAS IN THE TROPICS THAT CAN DEVELOP INTO TYPHOONS



SO WE SET COURSE TO THE NORTH AND BY THE TIME WE REACHED THAT LITTLE ISLAND WITHOUT A NAME IT WAS ALREADY SUNSET.

THE NORTH SIDE OF THE ISLAND OFFERED GOOD PROTECTION FROM THE WIND AND GOOD ANCHORAGES. AND IN THE FADING LIGHT WE CAUGHT SIGHT OF A SMALL INLET...



BUT THE PILOT, WHO KNEW ABOUT THE ISLAND BUT HAD ACTUALLY NEVER BEEN INSIDE THE INLET...

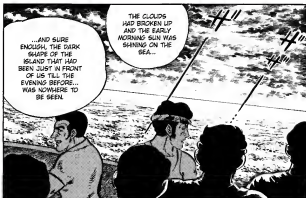
"IF WE COULD ONLY GET IN THERE, WE'D BE MUCH SAFER"... SAID THE CAPTAIN.

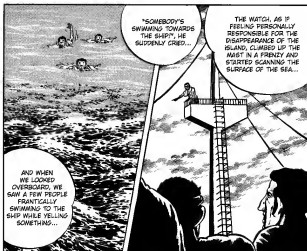


...NOT KNOWING ITS ACTUAL DEPTH AND NOT SURE HE COULD TRUST THE ENGINE, DECIDED AGAINST IT SAYING IT WAS TOO DARK.











... AFTER REACHING
THE ISLAND THE DAY
BEFORE, THEY SET
UPON REPAIRING
THEIR SAIL AND THEN
MOVED TO HIGHER
GROUND TO SPEND
THE NIGHT...

ONLY LATER WE FOUND
OUT THEY'D BEEN
FISHING OFF THE COAST
OF MIKOOJIMA IN THE
OGASAKARA GROUP WHEN
A STRONG WIND RIPPED
THEIR SAILS AND THEY HAD
DRIFTED NORTHWARDS...



...BUT AT THE TIME
THEY WERE IN A STATE
OF SHOCK AND WE
COULDN'T UNDERSTAND
WHAT THEY WERE
TRYING TO SAY...



...AS YOU
WOULD EXPECT
WHEN AN
ISLAND OF
THAT SIZE
SINKS...

...THERE
WERE LARGE
WHIRLPOOLS...

FROM THEIR
STORY WE
UNDERSTOOD
THAT THE ISLAND
HAD SUNK WHILE
THEY WERE
ASLEEP...



...AND ENDED UP
SWIMMING IN THE
MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN,
ALL THE WHILE PRAYING
TO THEIR GOD...

...AND THEIR CANDLES
WERE SWEEP AWAY
IN THE DARK. THEY
LOST ALL SENSE OF
DIRECTION...





THE CAPTAIN WAS STANDING AT THE BOW STARING AT THE SEA IN FRONT OF HIM... HE HAD CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE AS A PILOT TOO AND, LOOKING AT THE SURFACE OF THE SEA, HE KEPT MUMBLING TO HIMSELF: "NO WAY THERE'S AN ISLAND BELOW US!"

NEXT, THE PILOT CHANGED COURSE TEN DEGREES TO THE WEST, REDUCED SPEED TO ABOUT A QUARTER AND STEERED THE SHIP FORWARD WITH EXTREME CAUTION.



THE PILOT STUCK HIS HEAD OUT OF THE PILOT HOUSE AND CRIED: "CAPTAIN! WE'RE PASSING OVER THE ISLAND RIGHT NOW!" "IF THAT'S TRUE, YOU'D BETTER BE CAREFUL!", SHOUTED BACK THE CAPTAIN.

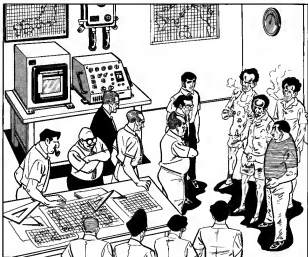
"KEEP AN EYE ON THE DEPTH SOUNDER!", THE CAPTAIN THUNDERED.

SOON IT BECAME CLEAR EVEN TO ME THAT THE COLOUR OF THE WATER HAD SUDDENLY CHANGED.









I'LL TRY... BUT I
I CAN'T HANDLE
VERY DETAILED
QUESTIONS...



DO YOU THINK
YOU CAN
INTERPRET
FOR ME?

...TO OUR FRIENDS
FROM URAGASU
ISLAND.

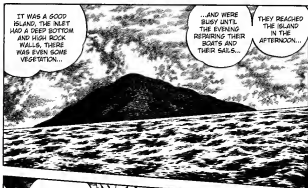
WELL... NOW I'D
LIKE TO ASK A FEW
QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE SINKING OF
THE ISLAND...



IT WAS A GOOD ISLAND. THE INLET HAD A DEEP BOTTOM AND HIGH ROCK WALLS. THERE WAS EVEN SOME VEGETATION...

...AND WERE BUSY UNTIL THE EVENING REPAIRING THEIR BOATS AND THEIR SAILS...

THEY REACHED THE ISLAND IN THE AFTERNOON...



...OR A DEPRESSION CREATED BY A FALLEN BOULDER.

THEY FOUND A FRESH WATER SPRING HALFWAY UP THE MOUNTAIN AND THEY ALSO DISCOVERED A CAVE, NOT VERY DEEP, WHICH COULD EITHER HAVE BEEN A LAVA TUBE...



...BUT THE CAVE
WAS QUIET AND
DARK AND, AFTER
THEIR FIRE HAD
DIED DOWN, THE
THREE OF THEM
FELL SOUND
ASLEEP

THE WIND
BLEW ALL
NIGHT...



THEY ALSO CAME UPON A MAN-
MADE ROAD CARVED IN THE
ROCK THAT LEAD TO A SMALL
HUT. RATHER THAN BREAKING
THE LOCK AND SLEEP INSIDE,
THEY DECIDED TO SPEND THE
NIGHT IN THE CAVE WHICH
OVERLOOKED THE INLET AND
THEIR CANDLES.



...OF A WAVE
CRASHING
NEARBY AND
WOKE UP THE
OTHER TWO.

IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE NIGHT
THE OLDEST ONE
OPENED HIS EYES
TO THE SOUND...





...THE ISLAND WAS
SINKING QUIETLY AND
NOISELESSLY, APART
FROM THE SOUND OF
THE WAVES BREAKING
AROUND THEM...

...IT WAS VERY
DARK AND THEY
COULDN'T FIND
THEIR CANOES...

BY THEN THE
WATER HAD
ALMOST REACHED
THE ENTRANCE OF
THE CAVE...



APPARENTLY NOT,
OR MAYBE THEY
WERE TOO SCARED
TO NOTICE...

...NO
TREMORS? NO
RUMBLING?



QUITE FAST.

...ABOUT
THE SAME
SPEED AS A
SUBMARINE.



HOW FAST
WAS THE
ISLAND
SINKING?



... STARTED
RUNNING TOWARDS
THE SUMMIT OF
THE ISLAND...

AS THE SEA WAS
RISING STEADILY,
THE THREE OF
THEM, WATER ON
THEIR HEELS...

...AND EVEN THAT LAST
ROCK WAS SINKING
FAST AND THE WATER
WAS SOON LAPPING AT
THEIR FEET...



BUT THERE WAS NO SUMMIT
ANYMORE...! THE ISLAND
HAD ALMOST COMPLETELY
DISAPPEARED UNDER THE
SEA... ALL THAT REMAINED
OF THE SUMMIT WAS A HALF
SUBMERGED ROCK CIRCLED
BY WHITE WAVES.





A FEW MINUTES AWAY
FROM DROWNING...
THEY FOUND A PIECE
OF DRIFTWOOD AND
TOOK TURNS HOLDING
ON TO IT...

...THEY COULDN'T
STOP THINKING
ABOUT SHARKS...

DARKNESS
SEEMED TO
AMPLIFY ALL
THEIR FEARS...

...BUT THEY COULDN'T
SEE THEM
ANYWHERE...



...PANICKY
AND HALF
DROWNED...

THEY WERE
LIFTED ON
BOARD...

THEY SWAM
TO IT CRYING
AT THE TOP
OF THEIR
LUNGS!

...SAVED!

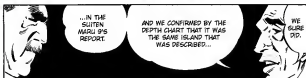
OVER THE HORIZON
THE SKY BEGAN TO
TURN WHITE AND
SUDDENLY A SHIP
APPEARED IN THE
DISTANCE...



THEY WERE TERRIFIED. THEIR ANCESTORS'
LEGENDS TOLD OF ISLANDS DISAPPEARING
UNDER THE SEA BUT NO ONE HAD EVER
SEEN IT HAPPEN. NOW THEY JUST WANT
TO GO BACK TO THEIR NATIVE URAGASHI
TO GIVE THANKS TO THEIR GODS.

















...BUT STILL
BETTER THAN
DOWN BELOW.

IT'S HOT
OUT HERE
TOO...

AND YET, BELOW THE DARK
OCEAN FLOOR, FAR AWAY
FROM HUMAN EYES, A
GIANT CREATURE OF FIRE
IS THRASHING ABOUT IN
THE SLUDGE ALONG THE
3000KM-LONG "RING OF
FIRE", LIKE A MONSTROUS
DRAGON STRIKING BACK
AT THE HARD STONE
CRUSHING HIM, SPEWING
FIRE AS HE WRITHES...

"MARE PACIFIC" ... WHO
WOULD THINK THAT UNDER
ITS PEACEFUL, STILL
WATERS LURKS A POWER
CAPABLE OF SWALLOWING
UP WHOLE A 1.5 KM-LONG
ISLAND WITHIN THE BRIEF
SPACE OF A NIGHT, WITHOUT
MAKING A SOUND?



LITTLE DO THEY
KNOW THAT WHAT
THEY'VE SEEN UNTIL
NOW IS NOTHING
BUT THE BREATH OF
THE MONSTER... A
FEW DROPS OF HIS
SWEAT.

...OCCASIONALLY, AS A
RESULT OF THEIR FIGHT,
THE FIRE SPLASHES
THROUGH THE EARTH'S
CRUST AND OUT OF THE
SEA, STRIKING TERROR
IN MEN'S HEARTS.





HEY! THAT'S
WHERE YOU
ARE!



WHAT IS GOING
ON DOWN THERE,
IN THE DARKNESS
BELOW THE SEAT?



IF WE WERE
TO JUST
THROW IT
OVERBOARD
WITHOUT ANY
CHECKS, IT'D
FILL UP WITH
WATER IN A
FLASH!

ABOUT ONE
HOUR AND
A HALF.

HOW LONG WILL
IT TAKE YOU TO
PREPARE THE SUB
FOR THE DIVE?



WE'LL
PROBABLY GET
A NOTE FROM
THE CAPTAIN
LATER.

WE'RE
ALL SET
TO START
TOMORROW
AT SEVEN.



... WE WON'T
BE USING
THEM ON THE
WADATSUMI.

WE BROUGHT
TWO OR THREE
SETS OF THE ART
GRAVITY CORES
BUT...



NOT FOR THE
TIME BEING.

ARE YOU HAVING
ANY SPECIAL
INSTRUMENTS
INSTALLED?



EVEN THE ERUPTION
IN THE BAYONNAISE
ROCKS SEEMS TO BE
OVER... A NEW SMALL
ISLAND HAS EMERGED
FROM THE SEA.

THEY JUST
FINISHED LOADING
EVERYONE ONTO
THE HOKUTO, THE
PATROL SHIP.

EVERY-
THING
SEEMS
O.K. FOR
NOW.



IS IT
GOING TO
ERUPT
ANY
TIME
SOON?

ANY
NEWS
ABOUT
TORI-
SHIMA?







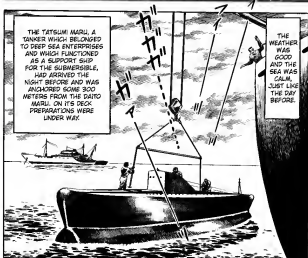


THE FOLLOWING
MORNING AT SEVEN,
ADVANCING AT
A SLOW SPEED
WHILE TAKING
DEPTH SOUNDINGS,
THE DAITO MARU
POSITIONED ITSELF
DIRECTLY ABOVE THE
SUNKEN ISLAND.

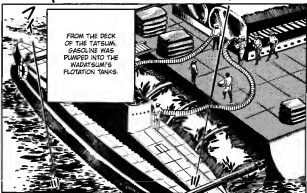


THE TATSUMI MARU, A
TANKER WHICH BELONGED
TO DEEP SEA ENTERPRISES
AND WHICH FUNCTIONED
AS A SUPPORT SHIP
FOR THE SUBMERSIBLE,
HAD ARRIVED THE
NIGHT BEFORE AND WAS
ANCHORED SOME 300
METERS FROM THE DAITO
MARU. ON ITS DECK
PREPARATIONS WERE
UNDER WAY.

THE
WEATHER
WAS
GOOD
AND THE
SEA WAS
CALM,
JUST LIKE
THE DAY
BEFORE.

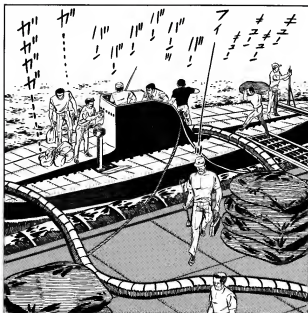






NONETHELESS, THE WORK OF PICARD, (WHO IN THE 1940'S BUILT THE FNRS1, THE FIRST STRATOSPHERIC BALLOON TO TAKE A MAN TO A HEIGHT OF 30,000 M, AND FOLLOWED IT UP WITH THE FNRS2, THE FIRST BATHYSCAPHE-TYPE DEEP-SEA SUBMARINE EVER), HAS HAD AN EVERLASTING EFFECT IN THE FIELD OF UNDERWATER EXPLORATION.

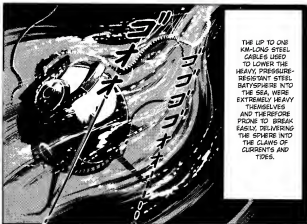
AT THE TIME OF OUR STORY, THE BATHYSCAPHE-TYPE DEEP-SEA SUBMERSIBLE FIRST BUILT BY PHYSICIST ALBERT PICARD IN 1948 WAS ALREADY OUTDATED. AMERICA HAD JUST BUILT TWO DEEP-SEA SUBMERSIBLES MADE OF LITHIUM, A METAL SLIGHTLY MORE BUOYANT THAN WATER, AND EQUIPPED WITH BUOYANCY TANKS MADE OF ALUMINUM OR RPP (REINFORCED PLASTIC).



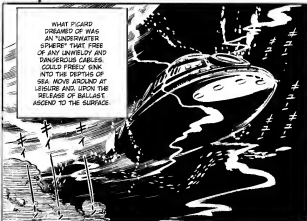
IN 1934 WILLIAM BEESE, DESCENDING TO A DEPTH OF 884 M IN A BATYSPHERE, HAD SET A NEW RECORD FOR THE DEEPEST DIVE. THE METHOD HE USED, HOWEVER, HAD NOT CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE THE TIMES OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER. IN A WAY, THE CLUMBERSOME STEEL CABLES HAD BECOME A FORMIDABLE OBSTACLE TO THE EXPLORATION OF THE DEEP SEA.

PICARD, THE "FLOTATION WIZARD", DREAMED OF A BALLOON THAT COULD MOVE FREELY IN THE SEA. ALL DEEP-SEA SUBMARINES UP TO THAT POINT HAD BEEN ATTACHED TO A MOTHER SHIP THROUGH A STEEL CABLE AND IT WAS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO SEVER THIS TIE.





THE UP TO ONE KM-LONG STEEL CABLES USED TO LOWER THE HEAVY, PRESSURE-RESISTANT STEEL BATHYSPHERE INTO THE SEA, WERE EXTREMELY HEAVY THEMSELVES AND THEREFORE PRONE TO BREAK EASILY, DELIVERING THE SPHERE INTO THE CLAWS OF CURRENTS AND TIDES.



WHAT PICARD DREAMED OF WAS AN "UNDERWATER SPHERE" THAT FREE OF ANY UNWIELDY AND DANGEROUS CABLES, COULD FREELY SINK INTO THE DEPTHS OF SEA, MOVE AROUND AT LEISURE AND, UPON THE RELEASE OF BALLAST, ASCEND TO THE SURFACE.



WHAT ABOUT A SUBMARINE?
MOST SUBMARINES,
UNFORTUNATELY, CANNOT
WITHSTAND EXTREME
PRESSURES; AT A
PRESSURE OF ABOUT A
TONNE PER SQUARE CM A
SUBMARINE'S HULL WOULD
BE CRUSHED LIKE PAPER.
EVEN CORK ITSELF, WHEN
SUBMERGED, WILL BE
COMPRESSED AND WILL
SINK LIKE A STONE.

REINFORCING THE
HULL OF A SUBMARINE
WOULD ALSO
INCREASE ITS WEIGHT
AND NEGATIVELY
AFFECT ITS BUOYANCY.
AND IF FLOATS WERE
ADDED TO
MAINTAIN BUOYANCY,
AN AIRTIGHT
FLOAT WOULD
LOSE ITS CAPACITY
TO WITHSTAND
PRESSURE.



BUT IF FLOATS WERE FILLED
WITH SEAWATER AND HAD
AN OPEN STRUCTURE, THE
PRESSURE OUTSIDE AND INSIDE
THE HULL WOULD BALANCE
AND EVEN A THIN HULL COULD
WITHSTAND HIGH PRESSURES.
HOWEVER, IN CASE OF AIR,
AT A PRESSURE OF SEVERAL
HUNDRED ATMOSPHERES,
ITS VOLUME WOULD BE
COMPRESSED SEVERAL
HUNDRED TIMES AND ITS
BUOYANCY WOULD DECREASE
SEVERAL HUNDRED TIMES.

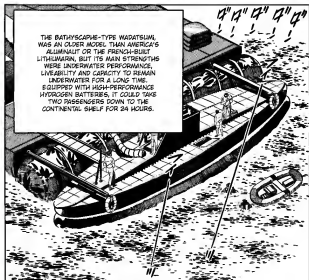
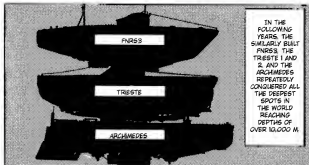


A SUBMERGED
BALLOON, FOR
EXAMPLE, REIST A
CERTAIN DEPTH,
WILL SINK LIKE A
STONE.

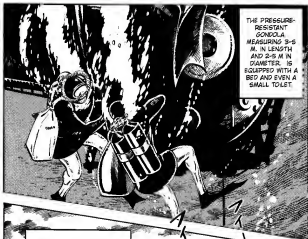
ON NOVEMBER 3,
1948, THE FARS2,
AN UNMANNED
BATHYSCAPHE EQUIPPED
WITH GASOLINE-FILLED
FLOATS DESCENDED TO
A DEPTH OF 900 M IN
THE SEA OFF SENEGAL'S
CAPITAL, DAKAR, AND
FLOATED BACK TO THE
SURFACE.

PICARD'S SOLUTION
WAS TO FILL THE
FLOATION TANKS WITH
GASOLINE, FOR ALL
PRACTICAL PURPOSES
INCOMPRESSIBLE
EVEN AT VERY HIGH
PRESSURES.

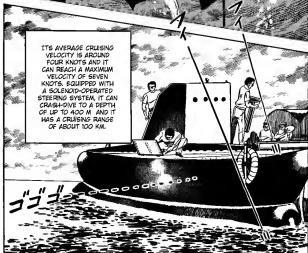




CONTINENTAL SHELF: THE PORTION OF THE SEA FLOOR SURROUNDING A CONTINENT. IT HAS AN AVERAGE DEPTH OF AROUND 100 M.



THE PRESSURE-RESISTANT GONDOLA, MEASURING 3-5 M. IN LENGTH AND 2-5 M IN DIAMETER, IS EQUIPPED WITH A BED AND EVEN A SMALL TOILET.

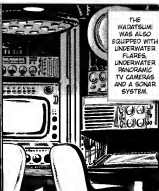


ITS AVERAGE CRUISING VELOCITY IS AROUND FOUR KNOTS AND IT CAN REACH A MAXIMUM VELOCITY OF SEVEN KNOTS. EQUIPPED WITH A SOLENOID-OPERATED STEERING SYSTEM, IT CAN CRASH-DIVE TO A DEPTH OF UP TO 400 M. AND IT HAS A CRUISING RANGE OF ABOUT 100 KM.

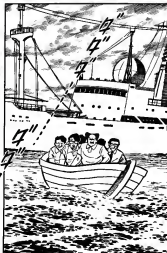
THE MOST IMPORTANT
PIECE OF
INSTRUMENTATION
HOWEVER, WAS
THE VLF RADIO
THAT MADE
UNDERWATER
COMMUNICATION
WITH THE MOTHER
SHIP POSSIBLE.



THE
NAUTISUB
WAS ALSO
EQUIPPED WITH
UNDERWATER
FLARES,
UNDERWATER
PANORAMIC
TV CAMERAS
AND A SONAR
SYSTEM.

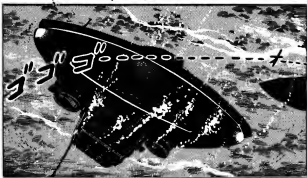


TWO OF US WILL STAY IN THE
COMMUNICATION ROOM ON
THE TATSUMI MARU, WHILE
FOUR OTHERS, IN GROUPS OF
TWO, WILL TAKE TURNS TO
RIDE IN THE SUBMERSIBLE.
WE'LL DO THREE DIVES
EACH, CHANGING THE DIVE
LOCATION AS WE SEE FIT.









HOW A BATHYSCAPHE WORKS.

THE BATHYSCAPHE'S FLOATS ARE FILLED WITH GASOLINE (LIGHTER THAN SEAWATER) FOR BUOYANCY. LEAD OR STEEL WEIGHT IS USED AS BALLAST.

1) BEFORE THE DIVE

AS WATER IS LET INTO THE AIR CYLINDERS, THE WEIGHT OF THE HULL INCREASES AND THE SUBMERSIBLE BEGINS TO DESCEND.



SEA SURFACE



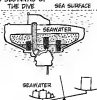
2) DURING THE DIVE

AS THE GASOLINE IS COMPRESSED BY THE SEAWATER, ITS VOLUME DECREASES AND SO DOES ITS BUOYANCY, INCREASING THE SPEED OF DESCENT.



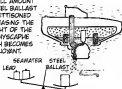
3) BEGINNING OF THE DIVE

SEAWATER FLOWS IN THROUGH THE SEAWATER SEACOCK, COMPRESSING THE GASOLINE.



4) BEGINNING OF ASCENT

A SMALL AMOUNT OF STEEL BALLAST IS JETTISONED DECREASING THE WEIGHT OF THE BATHYSCAPHE WHICH BECOMES BUOYANT.



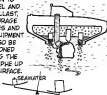
5) ON THE BOTTOM

AS THE GUIDE CHAIN REACHES THE BOTTOM, ITS WEIGHT IS SUBTRACTED FROM THE TOTAL WEIGHT OF THE HULL AND THE RATE OF DESCENT DECREASES.



IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, IN ADDITION TO THE STEEL AND LEAD BALLAST, THE STORAGE BATTERIES AND OTHER EQUIPMENT CAN ALSO BE JETTISONED TO BRING THE BATHYSCAPHE UP TO THE SURFACE.

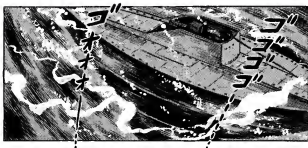
6) EMERGENCY ASCENT

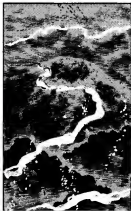


7) RISING TO THE SURFACE

AS THE BATHYSCAPHE RISES TO THE SURFACE, THE LEAD BALLAST AND THE WIRE ROPE ARE DROPPED.







WE DON'T KNOW HOW
LARGE IS THE ZONE
AFFECTED... THE CHARTS
DON'T SHOW ANY DIP IN
THIS AREA.

THE OCEAN FLOOR
AROUND THE ISLAND
SEEMS TO HAVE TIPPED
OVER THREE DEGREES
TO THE EAST.

BWEEP-
BWEEP...
DAITO NARU
SPEAKING...
DO YOU READ
ME?

...HOW DO YOU
EXPLAIN THE
FACT THAT, EVEN
THOUGH THE
OCEAN FLOOR SANK
ALMOST 200 M IN
ONE DAY, THERE
WAS NO TSUNAMI?

PROFESSOR
TADORO.....

COULD IT
BE THE
EFFECT
OF A
LANDSLIDE
...?

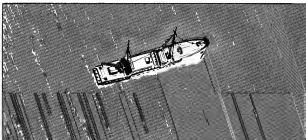
WHAT'S MORE,
THE BOTTOM
SEEMS TO BE
ABOUT 180 M
DEEPER THAN
SHOWN IN THE
CHARTS.

...I JUST
DON'T
KNOW.

SOMEHOW EQUILIBRIUM
WAS MAINTAINED BUT...
I CAN'T FIGURE OUT
HOW...

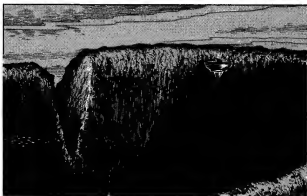
I DON'T
KNOW!

I JUST DON'T KNOW...
THAT'S ALL I'VE
BEEN HEARING SINCE
YESTERDAY...



THE WADATSUMI BEGAN TO CIRCLE
THE PEAK OF THE SUNKEN ISLAND AT
A SPEED OF ABOUT THREE KNOTS.
EVEN AT A DEPTH OF ABOUT 80
M THERE WAS ENOUGH SUNLIGHT
TO DISCERN THE CREASES ON THE
CRATER WALL OF THE OLD VOLCANO.
THE MARKS OF WIND AND WATER
EROSION WERE CLEARLY VISIBLE ON
ITS SIDES, CONFIRMING THAT PART
OF THE ISLAND HAD BEEN ABOVE THE
SURFACE UNTIL RECENTLY.





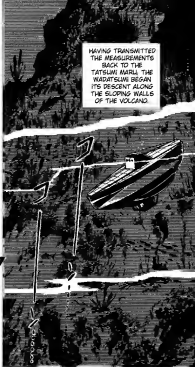
...BUT BY SOME
SECONDARY CAUSE
AFTER THE CRATER
WAS FORMED.

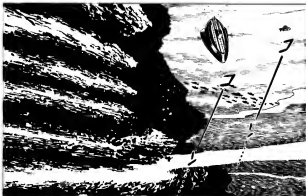
I SEE... THAT
CREVICE IN THE
CRATER WALL WAS
NOT CAUSED BY
THE ERUPTION...



...AND APPROX-
IMATELY
100 M
DEEP.

THE
OPENING OF
THE CRATER
IS ABOUT
2-300 M
WIDE...







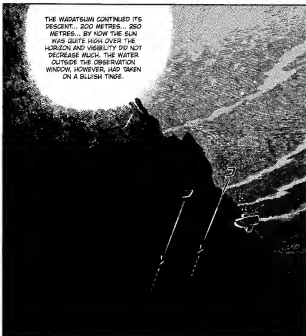
I'M GOING
DOWN
AGAIN.



...THE WHOLE
ISLAND HAS
TIPPED THREE
TO FOUR
DEGREES TO
THE EAST.

ASSUMING
THAT'S THE
SEA-LEVEL
MARK FROM
THREE DAYS
AGO...

LEAH...



THE WADATSUMI CONTINUED ITS
DESCENT... 200 METRES... 250
METRES... BY NOW THE SUN
WAS QUITE HIGH OVER THE
HORIZON AND VISIBILITY DID NOT
DECREASE MUCH. THE WATER
OUTSIDE THE OBSERVATION
WINDOW, HOWEVER, HAD TAKEN
ON A BLuish TINGE.



OCEANIC RISE: A LONG AND BROAD ELEVATION OF THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN FLOOR. TWO OF THE BEST KNOWN ARE THE MARCUS-HECKER RISE IN THE NORTHERN OCEAN PACIFIC AREA AND THE EAST PACIFIC RISE IN THE SOUTHEASTERN PACIFIC AREA.



THOSE
ARE
RIPPLE
MARKS*

...



UHM...

...JUST LOOK AT
THAT...!

THE MUD AT THE
BOTTOM MUST
HAVE SHIFTED
VIOLENTLY NOT SO
LONG AGO.



VOLCANIC ROCKS
AND VOLCANIC
PROJECTILES
... GUT IN THE
OPEN!



OKAY

...HEAD TOWARDS
THE EASTERN PART
OF THE SHELF
FOLLOWING THE
SLOPE.

ONODERA...



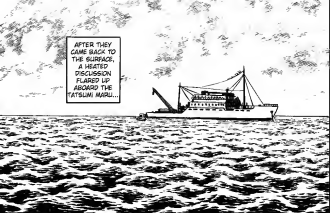
RATHER THAN
SHIFTED...
I'D SAY THAT
SOMETHING
LIKE A
LANDSLIDE
MUST'VE
OCCURRED...



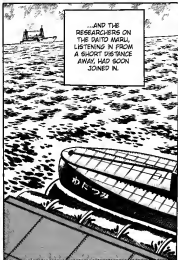
WOULDN'T YOU SAY
THAT THE OCEAN
FLOOR HERE HAS
SHIFTED OVER A
LARGE AREA AT
THE SAME ANGLE?

* RIPPLE MARKS: SEDIMENTARY STRUCTURES CAUSED BY THE ERODIVE ACTION OF CURRENTS OR WAVES ON THE OCEAN FLOOR.

AFTER THEY
CAME BACK TO
THE SURFACE,
A HEATED
DISCUSSION
FLARED UP
ABOARD THE
TATSUMI MARU...



...AND THE
RESEARCHERS ON
THE DAITO MARU,
LISTENING IN FROM
A SHORT DISTANCE
AWAY, HAD SOON
JOINED IN.



IN FACT, THE
DISCUSSION HAD
STARTED AS SOON
AS THE WADATSUMI,
HAVING DROPPED
SOME BALLAST AND
BEGUN ITS ASCENT,
HAD CONTACTED THE
MOTHER SHIP OVER
THE VLF RADIO...



WHILE THE NECESSARY
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SECOND
DIVE, SUCH AS REPLACING BALLAST,
TAPES AND AUTOMATED MEASURING
DEVICES, WERE UNDER WAY, THE
ARGUMENT TRAGED ON FOR QUITE
SOME TIME ON BOARD THE TATSUMI
MARU AND THE DAITO MARU.



...AS COULD BE
INFERRED FROM
THE PRESENCE OF
BIOTA AND ROCKS
WHERE THE SEA
CURRENTS RAN
INTO THE SLOPE...

THE FISHERIES AND
FORESTRY AGENCY
PEOPLE SWORE
THAT IT HAD BEEN
THERE UNTIL VERY
RECENTLY...

PROFESSOR TOSIRO
KEPT INSISTING THAT THE
BOUNDARY BETWEEN THE
CONTINENTAL SLOPE AND
THE OCEANIC RISE HAD
VANISHED.

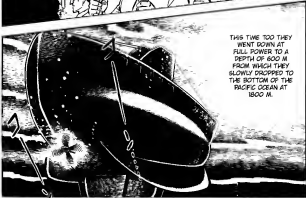


...AND THAT THE ANGLE
OF THE INCLINE HAD
SIMPLY DIMINISHED AS
THE SLOPE HAD BEEN
COVERED BY MUDSLIDES
FROM THE OCEANIC RISE.





THE MOMENT EVERYTHING
WAS READY FOR THE
SECOND DIVE, PROFESSOR
YUKAMAGA AND A
SPECIALIST IN VOLCANOES
JUMPED ABOARD. SUCH
WAS THEIR HURRY THAT
THEY TOOK THEIR LUNCH
DOWN WITH THEM.

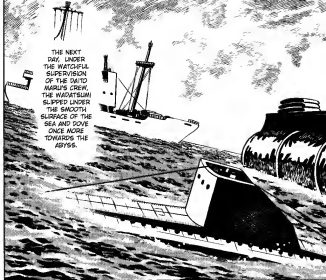


THIS TIME TOO THEY
WENT DOWN AT
FULL POWER TO A
DEPTH OF 600 M.
FROM WHICH THEY
SLOWLY DROPPED TO
THE BOTTOM OF THE
PACIFIC OCEAN AT
1800 M.

ONCE AGAIN THE TWO
SCIENTISTS MADE SEVERAL
EXCITING DISCOVERIES, THE
USUALLY POISED YURINAGA
EVEN LETTING OUT A LOUD
CRY OF SURPRISE ONCE.







THE NEXT DAY, UNDER THE WATCHFUL SUPERVISION OF THE DAITO MARU'S CREW, THE WADATSUMI SLIPPED UNDER THE SMOOTH SURFACE OF THE SEA AND DOVE ONCE MORE TOWARDS THE ABYSS.



THIS TIME THE TWO PASSENGERS WERE PROFESSORS TADORO AND YUKINAGA.





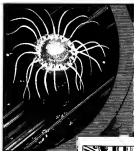
TEN SE-
CONDS



SOUND WAVES TRAVEL THROUGH WATER AT A SPEED OF 1500 M PER SECOND...



*SUBTROPICAL CONVERGENCE: AN AREA OF CONVERGING CURRENTS, GENERALLY LOCATED IN MID LATITUDES. IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE IT MARKS THE BORDER BETWEEN THE KUROSHIO CURRENT AND THE NORTH PACIFIC CURRENT.



LOOK... A
LUMINOUS
SHRIMP.



...A VERITABLE
WORLD OF
DARKNESS OUT
THERE...

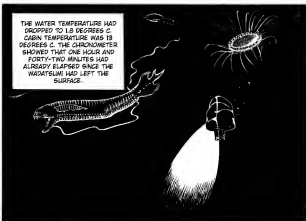


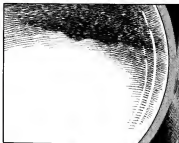
IT'S QUITE COLD,
YOU'D BETTER PUT
ON YOUR JACKET.

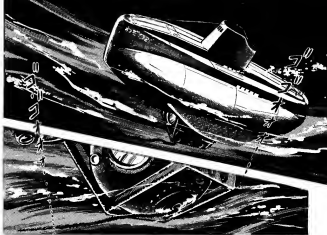


THE
DEPTH
IS NOW
1000 M...









HOW'S
IT
POS-
SIBLE?

...THIS DEEP
DOWN?

... A
CURRENT
SO
STRONG...



...AN
UNDER-
WATER
TIDAL
CURRENT

NO... I
THINK IT
WAS...



DID WE
CRASH?

WHAT
WAS
THAT?



I CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT!

IMPOSSIBLE... A
CURRENT SO FAST
7000 M UNDER
THE SEA?



...BUT NEVER INTO
ONE SO STRONG.
IT MUST HAVE
BEEN OVER THREE
AND A HALF
KNOTS.

I'M NOT
SURE... I'VE
RUN INTO THEM
BEFORE...



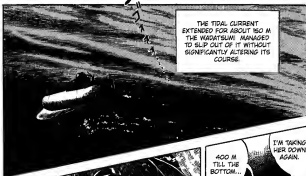


ANYWAY, WE'VE
ALREADY LEFT IT
BEHIND.

THERE'S NO
REASON FOR
IT...



...A TIDAL
CURRENT AT
SUCH DEPTH
IS UNHEARD
OF...!



THE TIDAL CURRENT
EXTENDED FOR ABOUT 150 M
THE WADATSUMI MANAGED
TO SLIP OUT OF IT WITHOUT
SIGNIFICANTLY ALTERING ITS
COURSE.



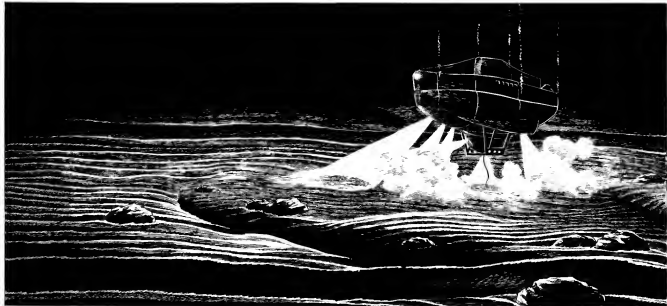
ADD IN
TILL THE
BOTTOM...

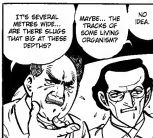
I'M TAKING
HER DOWN
AGAIN.



THE SPEED OF DESCENT DECREASED TO BETWEEN 1.5 TO 1.2 M PER SECOND AND EVENTUALLY FELL BELOW 1 M PER SECOND. BY TURNING THE ELECTRIC PROPELLER PERPENDICULAR TO THE SUB'S AXIS AND BY SLOWLY APPLYING THE BRAKE, THE SUB COULD BE MADE TO TURN ITS NOSE UP BUT THE MOMENT THE ENGINE WAS CUT OFF THE SUB STARTED SINKING AGAIN AT HALF A METER PER SECOND.













...AND THEN THE RUT THAT HAD BEEN RUNNING ABOUT 40M TO THEIR LEFT SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED INTO THE MUD OF THE OCEAN FLOOR.

BY THE TIME THE WADATSUMI HAD PROCEEDED FOR ABOUT TWO KILOMETRES AT A SPEED OF THREE KNOTS, THE RUT HAD ALMOST DOUBLED IN WIDTH AND HAD BECOME SHALLOWER...

THE SLOPE OF THE OCEAN FLOOR IS GETTING STEEPER...

WE'VE REACHED A DEPTH OF 7900 M...

...AND THE WATER IS GETTING MURKIER.

THE SILENCE WAS BROKEN ONLY BY THE FAINT HUM OF THE ENGINE AND THE SOUND OF THE ULTRASONIC OSCILLATOR AT ONE-MINUTE INTERVALS.





IT FELT LIKE A... BOTTOM WAVE. IN WHICH CASE... THERE ARE EITHER DENSE SPRING LAYERS EVEN AT THESE DEPTHS OR ELSE... STATIONARY WAVES*...!

CLOSE TO THE SURFACE THE WATER WAS STILL... WHY THE SUDDEN TURBULENCE DOWN HERE?

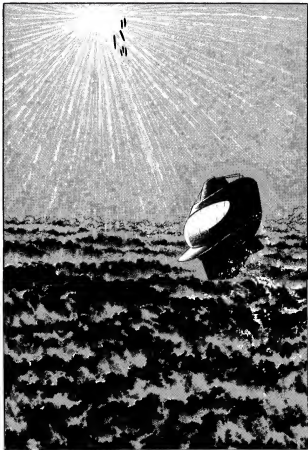
WHAT COULD HAVE CAUSED THAT VERTICAL JOLT?



THE WADITSUMI ADVANCED THREE MORE KILOMETERS... THE TRENCH SEEMED TO STRETCH ON FOREVER. EVEN AT ITS NARROWEST POINT IT WAS STILL SEVERAL TENS OF KILOMETERS WIDE. THE SLOPE OF THE OCEAN FLOOR VERY FAR ON ITS OUTER EDGE.

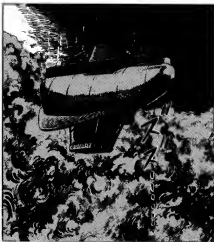
STATIONARY WAVES (OR STANDING WAVES)*: IN THE SURFACE LAYERS OF THE SEA A BOUNDARY LAYER SOMETIMES FORMS BETWEEN COLD AND WARM WATERS; WHEN THIS BOUNDARY LAYER PRODUCES A STATIONARY WAVE, ITS MOVEMENT SELDOM AFFECTS THE SURFACE OF THE SEA. IF THE BOUNDARY LAYER RISES CLOSE TO THE SURFACE, A PHENOMENON CALLED "PHANTOM WAVE" OCCURS WHEREBY A SHIP WON'T BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD, NO MATTER HOW FAST ITS PROPELLER TURNS. IN FACT, SINCE THE PROPELLER IS IN THE PROXIMITY OF THE LAYER, THE CURRENT IT CREATES TURNS INTO ENERGY THAT BRINGS ABOUT A STATIONARY WAVE INSTEAD OF FORWARD MOTION.





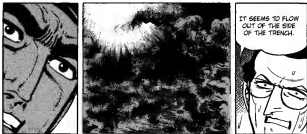








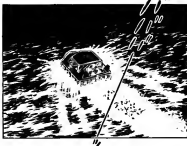




**KUNNEN: DUTCH MARINE GEOLOGIST.







Chapter 2: Tokyo



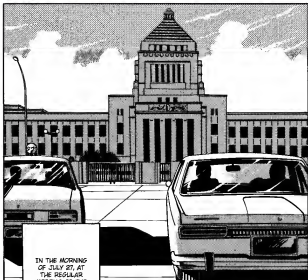












IN THE MORNING
OF JULY 27, AT
THE REGULAR
MEETING OF THE
CABINET, THE CHIEF
CABINET DIRECTOR
GAVE A REPORT
ON THE DAMAGE
CAUSED BY THE
IZU EARTHQUAKE.

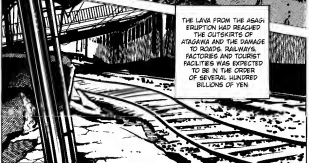




THE REPORTS WERE STILL COMING IN BUT IT WAS ALREADY ESTIMATED THAT SEVERAL THOUSAND BUILDINGS HAD BEEN DESTROYED BY THE COMBINED EFFECTS OF THE EARTHQUAKE, THE TSUNAMI AND THE ERUPTION.



THE FINAL NUMBER OF AFFECTED BUILDINGS HOWEVER, WAS EXPECTED TO BE IN THE ORDER OF SEVERAL TENS OF THOUSANDS.



THE LAVA FROM THE ASAGI ERUPTION HAD REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF ATAGAMA AND THE DAMAGE TO ROADS, RAILWAYS, FACTORIES AND TOURIST FACILITIES WAS EXPECTED TO BE IN THE ORDER OF SEVERAL HUNDRED BILLIONS OF YEN

OVER THE YEARS WE'VE
EARMARKED A LARGE
PORTION OF THE BUDGET
FOR EARTHQUAKE
PREDICTION... I
WOULD'VE EXPECTED
SOME RESULTS BY NOW.



WELL, SIR, FROM WHAT
THE SCIENTISTS TELL US,
WE'RE STILL AT LEAST FIVE
TO TEN YEARS AWAY FROM
PREDICTING EARTHQUAKES,
LET ALONE ERUPTIONS.



...EITHER THE
EARTHQUAKE
OR THE
ERUPTIONS, AM
I RIGHT?

I UNDERSTAND
THERE HADN'T
BEEN ANY
WARNINGS
ABOUT...



...DISCERNING
THE SIGNS OF
A POSSIBLE
EARTHQUAKE IN
A CERTAIN AREA
IS NOT AN EASY
TASK.

AND GIVEN
THE RECENT
PROLIFERATION
OF EARTH-
QUAKES...

TO BE HONEST, AT THE
MOMENT WE'RE NOT EVEN
SURE WHY EARTHQUAKES
OCCUR IN THE FIRST PLACE.



...CAUSED BY
THE DOZENS OF
SMALL TREMORS
OCCURRING DAILY
WAS EXTREMELY
DIFFICULT.

...RECOGNIZING
THEM AHEAD OF
TIME AMID ALL THE
ELECTROMAGNETIC
NOISE...



THERE WERE PROBABLY
PLENTY OF SIGNS
ANNOUNCING THE LAST
EARTHQUAKE TOO BUT...

THE PEOPLE FROM
METEOROLOGICAL
AGENCY SAID THE
SAME THING...



















THEY'LL FORGET ABOUT IT SOON ENOUGH.

LET THEM TALK... IT CHANGES NOTHING.





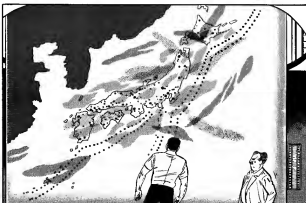


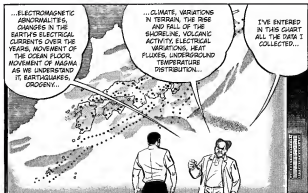






I DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA! THAT'S WHY I NEED TO INVESTIGATE!







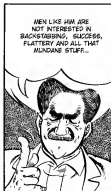


















... THIS COMPASSIONATE STAR THAT HAS NURSED US AND SHELTERED US WITH ITS ATMOSPHERE FROM THE COLD AND EMPTY DARKNESS OF THE UNIVERSE, THAT HAS PROTECTED THE LAND, THE GREEN TREES, THE INSECTS.

IT MAY SOUND STRANGE ON MY LIPS BUT... THIS WARM, RUGGED PLANET...

... JAPAN, THIS TINY THREAD OF ISLANDS... ITS FATE DOES NOT CONCERN ME.

I CARE ABOUT THE EARTH...!

... BUT IT'D DO US NO GOOD TO FIGHT HER.

THIS PLANET, SHE CAN BE VERY CRUEL AT TIMES...

...THIS PLANET, THE ONLY ONE IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM TO GIVE BIRTH TO ITS OWN PROGENY...

...AND YOU SECRETLY LOVE JAPAN, JUST LIKE YOU LOVE THE EARTH... I KNOW YOU FEEL FOR HER THE SAME AFFECTION YOU FEEL FOR THIS PLANET OF OURS...

BUT YOU'RE ALSO A JAPANESE PROFESSOR...

HOLD IT! HOW DO YOU KNOW I'VE CONCEALED INFORMATION FROM MY FINANCIAL SPONSORS?

WHY WOULDN'T YOU SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW WITH HYPER-LOVING JOURNALISTS AND SCOP-HUNGRY WEEKLY-MAGAZINE REPORTERS?

IF YOU DIDN'T, WHY WOULD YOU WITHHOLD DATA FROM THE GLOBAL SEA CHURCH...?







...WHAT
COULD IT
BE...?

...WHAT DID
PROFESSOR
TADORO SEE AT
THE BOTTOM OF
THE SEA...?



...WHAT'S
THREATENING
JAPAN?

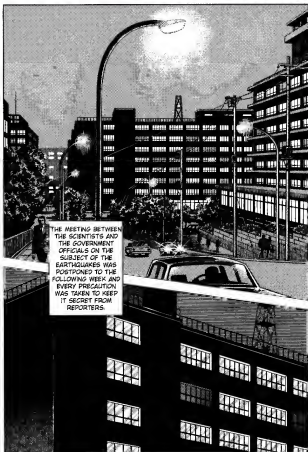


...WHAT IS IT...?

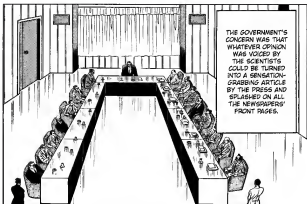


I WILL
ATTEND
THAT
MEETING OR
CONFERENCE OF
YOURS...

YOU WON,
YUKINAGA.



THE MEETING BETWEEN THE SCIENTISTS AND THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE EARTHQUAKES WAS POSTPONED TO THE FOLLOWING WEEK AND EVERY PRECAUTION WAS TAKEN TO KEEP IT SECRET FROM REPORTERS.

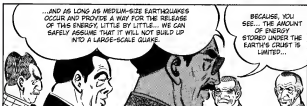




*ALPINE OROGENIC MOVEMENT : A MOUNTAIN-MAKING MOVEMENT WHICH BEGAN AT THE START OF THE CENOZOIC ERA AND DURING WHICH THE PRESENT CONFIGURATION OF THE WORLD'S CONTINENTS AND COASTS TOOK SHAPE. THE ALPS, THE CAUCASUS, THE HIMALAYAN REGION AND THE CIRCUM-PACIFIC VOLCANIC BELT (THE RING OF FIRE) WERE ALL FORMED IN THIS OROGENIC MOVEMENT.



PLEISTOCENE: THE LAST OF THE FIVE EPOCHS IN WHICH THE TERTIARY PERIOD OF THE CENOZOIC ERA IS SUBDIVIDED. IT EXTENDED FROM 5-4 MILLION TO 2-4 MILLION YEARS BEFORE PRESENT.





...HAS
CLIMBED TO
UNPRECEDENTED
HEIGHTS IN THE
LAST FIVE TO
SIX YEARS

...THE SO
CALLED
"INDEX OF
SEISMICITY"



HOW-
EVER...



THAT'S NOT
SURPRISING...
WITH ALL THESE
EARTHQUAKES.

...BUT IN THE
LAST FIVE, SIX
YEARS IT HAS
SHOT UP TO
OVER 400!

...UNTIL
RECENTLY
HOVERED
BETWEEN 380
AND 390...

JAPAN'S
INDEX
VILLE, THE
HIGHEST
IN THE
WORLD...



BUT WE MUST KEEP IN
MIND THAT THE NUMBER
OF EXCEPTIONALLY
LARGE ONES IS
DECREASING.

...OF COURSE
IT IS, AND
CONSIDERABLY
SO!

NOBODY'S
SAVING THE
NUMBER
OF EARTH-
QUAKES IS NOT
INCREASING



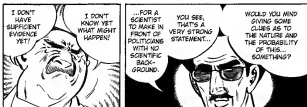
...TO
18,000.

THE TOTAL
AVERAGE OF
EARTHQUAKES
RECORDED PER
YEAR, 7500,
HAS ALMOST
DOUBLED...

INDEX OF SEISMICITY: A NUMERICAL VALUE INDICATING THE NUMBER OF EARTHQUAKES OVER A CERTAIN MAGNITUDE OCCURRING IN A GIVEN AREA OVER A GIVEN PERIOD OF TIME. IT IS USED AS A WIDESPREAD TO MEASURE THE FREQUENCY OF EARTHQUAKES IN A CERTAIN AREA.

















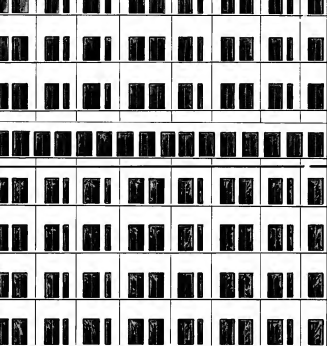


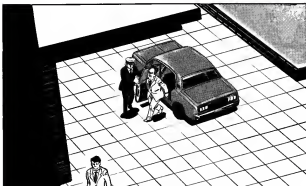




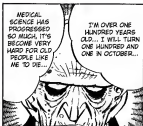


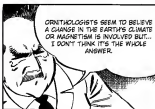


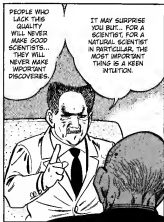




















HOW
WOULD
YOU LIKE
A FRENCH
ONE, THE
KERMADICK?



I WANT TO
CHARTER A
JAPANESE
SHIP...



HOW
WOULD I
LIKE IT...?



I'M SURE THE
GLOBAL SEA
CHURCH WILL
FIND SOMEONE
ELSE TO
CONTINUE
YOUR WORK.

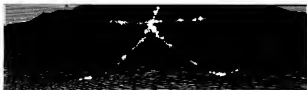










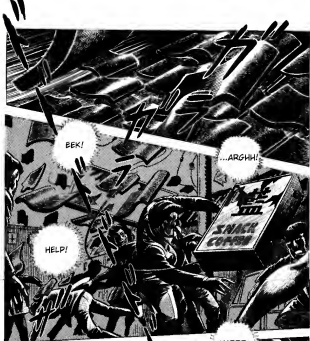






...AN
EARTH-
QUAKE!

...IT'S A
BIG ONE!































THE GREAT KYOTO EARTHQUAKE, THE FIRST TO TAKE PLACE IN THE HANAYAMA EARTHQUAKE ZONE IN A LONG TIME, CAUSED A LARGE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES, MOSTLY AMONG THE CROWDS WHO HAD COME TO SEE THE FESTIVAL, AND PLUNGED THE COUNTRY INTO A STATE OF SHOCK.



MANY OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAD
ASSEMBLED ON THE SANJO AND
SHIJO BRIDGES, IN PONTCHAO
AND IN THE KIYAMACHI AREA,
DIED FALLING FROM THE BRIDGES
OR CRUSHED UNDER THE WEIGHT
OF THE COLLAPSED HOUSES...



MANY OTHERS WERE TRAMPLED TO
DEATH IN THE ENSUING CONFUSION.
IN THE WHOLE CITY, IN ONE BRIEF
MOMENT 4,300 PEOPLE DIED AND
13,000 OTHERS WERE INJURED.





IT WAS A DISASTER OF
UNIMAGINABLE PROPORTIONS...
WHOLE AREAS OF THE CITY
IN PONTCHO, KIWAMACHI,
MIYAKAWAMACHI, KINOWAZU WERE
COMPLETELY DESTROYED... EVEN
THE MINAMIZU THEATRE WAS
SEVERELY DAMAGED.



ONODERAAA!

ONODERAAA!







Japan sinks (1)

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Translated from Japanese by Paolo Faresi

Published by Leed Publishing Co.,Ltd.
2-3-2, Koenji-Kita Suginami-ku, Tokyo, JAPAN
www.leed.co.jp

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